

THE Harbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

No. 59.

MELBOURNE, JULY 1st, 1875.

PRICE SIXPENCE

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THE nature of our early training, and the prejudices of our progenitors, exercises a powerful influence not only in the direction of our thoughts, but in our attitude towards new truths, which come before us in our maturer years. This is especially apparent in reference to Spiritualism and Spiritualists. The great majority of those whose only knowledge of the subject is gleaned from what comes under their notice in the press, allow the bias of early education to prejudice their judgment, and assume that its votaries are weak-minded and irrational. This prejudice is not peculiar to sectarians, but is as prevalent amongst materialists as amongst the most orthodox religionists; indeed, in many instances, the former is by far the more contemptuous of the two. From his point of view a belief in anything superhuman is an evidence of mental weakness, and no amount of logical argument will shake his faith in the supremacy of tangible matter. Such minds as these can only be reached by positive material demonstrations of spiritual power; but there are large numbers of the nominal adherents of the churches who feel the insufficiency of their religious systems to supply the demands of their spiritual and intellectual natures, and are only prevented from approaching that subject which would lead to a satisfaction of their wants, by the idea that Spiritualism is a retrogressive rather than a progressive religion. The general tendency of thought in the churches is towards materialism; a belief in the supernatural is rapidly dying out; faith in the miraculous wanes, and few, indeed, are those who adhere to the strictly literal interpretation of the Scriptures, though nominally accepting that interpretation by remaining members of churches which hold the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Bible. To this large section of society a more accurate knowledge of the philosophy and scope of modern Spiritualism would be a boon, and

it should be the object of those who have derived happiness from the acquisition of spiritual truth to make known the gospel of Spiritualism far and wide, that those who hunger may at least have food placed within their reach, and not only that, but that the constituents of that food should be made apparent to them, that they might use their judgment in its acceptance or rejection. It is of no use saying eat, and be filled; the hungry mind must first be convinced that the food offered is wholesome, and will satisfy its cravings—that it is bread, and not stones. The first and most important fact to be made more generally known is, that Spiritualists as a body are Rationalists, and have arrived at their convictions, not by faith, but through the careful exercise of the reasoning faculties brought to bear on evidence presented. Next, the sublime philosophy unfolded by the evidences of immortality and endless individual progression; the enlarged conceptions of the Deity, and fuller realisation of His fatherhood, and the brotherhood of man. To bring this prominently before the public, able lecturers are required, and none would be so potent in their influence as those who exhibit in their lives the fruits of the philosophy they profess. Mr. Charles Bright suggested, as a means of enlightenment and inquiry, the printing and distribution of high-class tracts, extracts from the writings of Gregg, Newman, and others. We confess to a prejudice against tract distribution, arising from disgust at the monotonously trashy character of the article which has been thrust upon us times out of number; but probably a sterling article, bijoux of bright thoughts and hopeful truths, free from all dogma, and appealing to man's higher nature through the intellect, would be welcomed and more thoroughly appreciated by contrast with the rubbish which has preceded them. A movement is on foot to invite Gerald Massey, the poet, to Victoria, he is an able exponent of Spiritualism and free religious thought; and a series of lectures by him would undoubtedly attract considerable attention. Then would be the time; while public interest is awakened, to spread far and wide a knowledge of Spiritualism in all its aspects. While popular prejudice is paramount, the press will not favor the dissemination of information with regard to Spiritualism; but when that prejudice is temporarily removed by a desire to

know more about it, arising from the immediate prominence of the subject, the press finds it to its interest to respond, and for a time scope is given for the ventilation of both sides of the question. This is all Spiritualists desire—"A fair field and no favor." We are content to place our loaf side by side with the orthodox or the materialistic one, and let the public take their choice; its constituents may be analysed, its texture and consistency tried, and if any impurities are found, none will be more willing than the Spiritualists to remove them.

COMMUNICATION.

Upon the sea of opinion many float helplessly to and fro, driven by any chance wind o'er mounting billows of doubt and hesitation, often upon the rocks of despair.

To those whose knowledge is obtained only from outer perception and the slight exercise of reason resulting therefrom, every new fact discovered sets them again adrift to waft them upon unexpected shores of belief.

Some tidal influence catches them as they are calmly riding in apparent safety, and in an instant they are again cast forth into new dangers. Rapids, shoals, and storms, are their hourly experience; of true peace they cannot conceive. Self-reliance is thoroughly undermined, faith shattered, hope blinded, reason hampered, and all the nobler faculties of the man distorted, if not destroyed.

Such a state is incompatible with either happiness or progress of any lasting description, no harbor is open to them, not even safety, unless they consent to forego their freedom and be battered down beneath the hatches of ignorance or intolerance, shut out from the free air of liberty, and the open sunshine of delight. They are without compass, their sails rent, and the rudder uncertain, if not useless. But how different, how much higher are those gifted with the perception or godlike intuition of pure principles—the guiding stars to all true progress, sweeping over the waves of prejudice, defying the winds of doubt, they control the elements, the bark, and the mariner. In them lies the only security, the crown of enjoyment, the strength and fortitude which overcomes all dangers, the soul of facts, they are beyond disturbance, they are the glorious heritage of the infant, the inherited results of the experiences of its ancestry.

You can attain to them with greater certainty with infinitely less toil, and far nobler profit, by laying yourself open to their reception, freeing the mind from all preconceptions, and so build up your brighter being and your tower of strength. Facts must ever be of great value to you as proofs, tests, guides, and experiences, but the better, truer powers of man, are exercised and developed more fully in the perception of principles, the right interpretation of facts,—without them the universe must appear a wild chaos of uncertain action, inharmonious, incomplete, and unlovely, but in the radiance of immutable principles, eternal beacons, as the stars upon your wandering earth, you can attain to knowledge far beyond this stage of existence, the wisdom which is the common glory of all the spheres, the happiness, peace, and love which beam and brighten now and for ever in worlds without end.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC.)

Learn from the orient shell to love thy foe,
And store with pearls the hand that brings thee woe;
Free, like yon rock, from base vindictive pride,
Enblaze with gems the wrist that rends thy side.
Mark where yon tree rewards the sunny shower,
With fruit nectarious, or the balmy flower;
All nature calls aloud—shall man do less
Than heal the smiter, and the railer bless?

(FROM THE SANSKRIT.)

The falling sandal breathes perfume upon
The cruel axe that strikes its fatal blow;
Thus generous virtue sheds its blossom on,
Not friends alone, but its vindictive foe.

Poetry.

MELBOURNE DEBATING SOCIETY.

We had great pleasure on observing that the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, in connection with Collins-street Independent Church, in order to secure perfect liberty in debate, have transformed themselves into "The Melbourne Debating Society." This is a step in advance, and we wish them every success.

The following lines were written by our correspondent Recluse on the occasion:—

ON THE FORMATION OF THE MELBOURNE DEBATING SOCIETY.

'Tis nobly done, stand firmly by the truth;
Earth has no cause more worthy of thy care;
Armed for discussion, be thy buckler proof,
Truth for thy sword, who to assault thee dare?
Truth is of God, what privilege is thine?
Who strives for truth, contends for heaven and light!
What foe dare stand before that power divine?
Wrong is exposed, when 'tis compared with right!
Reason and conscience, precious gifts of heaven,
Sent from above, will succour lend to thee!
Through truth and these, blind error will be driven
Ashamed to darkness and obscurity!
He who's afraid to test the cause he loves
A guilty conscience has to us revealed,
A want of faith, in his own doctrines proves;
While truth before the strongest test can't yield.
Discussion means fair play, in broad daylight,
Justice, and truth for God, and all mankind.
And he who shirks it, proves he feels its weight,
Dreads lest exposed, he should be forced to yield.
Nothing is perfect but the God of love!
Creation is progressive, so is man!
But Bigotry and Error will not move
Obstructing truth and progress where they can.
Truth is of God, eternal as the spheres
Is righteousness, and holiness, and bliss;
Error means doubt, and danger, sin, and tears,
Blindness, corruption, cruelty, distress.
As Nature's works, and laws, O God, are Thine,
The more we know of them, the more of Thee!
There may we read Thy character Divine,
And in our works and lives exhibit what we see.

RECLUSE.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

SCIENTIFIC RELIGION.—FAITH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—As much stress is put upon "Faith" by modern Orthodoxy, it is a fit subject for a paper in the *Harbinger*. This term was rarely used by Jesus, but was held in great favour by Paul, and in the Gospel said to be by John; which most of your readers know, I hold to be wholly spurious; there it is called "belief."

The character Paul and John give to Faith is so different to that given by Jesus in the three first gospels, that the writer classifies them among the *false Prophets*, against whom Jesus often warns us.

Jesus generally used the word "Faith" to imply confidence in God, as in the following passage:—"Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these;" "wherefore if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, *O ye of little faith!*"

The same meaning seems attached to it where it is applied to Abraham in Romans, where we read, "He staggered not at the promises through unbelief, but was

strong in faith, giving glory to God: being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was also able to perform." Rom. iv., 20. Jesus no where, either in his teaching or his parables, taught "*Justification by Faith*" in an atonement, nor was it referred to by Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost.

No man has power over his belief or unbelief; these depend upon evidence and education; for *belief is involuntary*. We cannot believe what we wish, neither can we disbelieve what we desire.

The faith of a well adjusted mind is governed by evidence alone. It would be therefore as irrational to punish a man for his belief or unbelief as to break scales for weighing correctly; they were made for that very purpose. God gave us our senses to examine evidence, and our reason to compare it to enable to judge correctly. He will not therefore punish us for doing so! When the evidence is clear and strong we are forced to believe, however unwilling we may be to do so; and if it be the reverse, we cannot, however desirous we may be believe (bigoted and distorted effects of education being allowed for; *which are also involuntary*.)

No man is therefore responsible for his belief or unbelief. It depends upon circumstances over which he has no control. No just man ever punishes his child for unbelief; from a conviction that it is involuntary; and shall man be more merciful than his God?

Another sense in which faith occurs in Scripture is simple "Belief," or the crediting of a testimony, as in the following passage from John—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus in Mark it is written—"Now when John was cast into prison, Jesus came into Galilee, and preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God; saying, the time is fulfilled the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel," Mark I, 14, 15. As an example also, it is written, referring to the turning of the water into wine—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Canaan of Galilee, and his disciples believed on him." Peter when preaching at Jerusalem told the Jews—"We are his witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, which God hath given to them that obey him." Acts V, 32.

But though the Holy Ghost is promised to continue in the Church "for ever," we have no convincing evidence that the Church now possesses it. Isaiah LIX, 21, John XIV, 16, Acts II, 37, 39. Hundreds of sects profess to be "the Church of Christ," and to possess that Spirit; these, like Babylon of old, appear to have been smitten with "confusion of tongues;" and confusion of spirits! Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Quakers, and Mormons! all say they possess it, yet the unity of the Spirit has ceased; and instead of "guiding" them "into all truth," John XVI, 13, it appears to lead them all different ways, for they condemn and disown each other! "Beware of false Prophets," said Jesus, "you shall know them by their fruits."

The word Faith is used in a third sense by Paul and John—in a supernatural one, meaning belief, divinely impressed, irrespective of evidence, known by the Orthodox as "saving grace." "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," Eph. I, 13, said Paul. He tells us it was written, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," "the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand; *not of works*, but of Him that calleth," Rom. IX, 11, 13. This doctrine is also taught in John's Gospel. Where Jesus is said to have taught, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," John III, 3. "Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God," I, 13.

This faith is evidently also involuntary; and as none but those so favoured can be saved (independent of good works or desires), this view represents God as partial and unjust, and forms a striking contrast with the description given us by Jesus of our Heavenly Father's character in the first three Gospels, and in all his teachings and parables!

Another reason why it would be unjust to reward or condemn men because of their belief is, that it is a law

of our nature that the religion taught us by our parents when we are young, becomes so deeply impressed on our minds that very few ever change their faith in after life. The history of our missions prove this; they have never in any instance been successful against the older faiths. The Jewish, the Mahomedan, and Bhuddists treat them with contempt, and even in India where for 50 years £100,000 a year has been expended in attempts to convert the natives; the *Missionary efforts have proved an utter failure!* Even among ourselves, Catholics and Protestants, Baptists and pedo Baptists; Unitarians and Trinitarians, usually retain their faith from one generation to another; even in spite of persecution, so that it is clearly proven by experiment that a man's faith is not a just criterion of his character. Jesus and Peter teach a totally different method; the former that he "shall reward every man according to his works," Matth. XVI, 27, the latter that in every nation, he that *feareth God and worketh righteousness* is accepted of him," Acts X, 35; see also Rev. XX, 12. This doctrine Paul frequently denies, see Rom. III, 20, Gal. II, 16, 2 Tim. I 9, Peter III, 5.

In conclusion, Science believes nothing, receives nothing as true, which cannot be demonstrated to the understanding, or made obvious to the senses. It rejects all statements which are inconsistent with reason, experiment, and the laws of nature; and all writings that are inconsistent or contradictory, for truth is neither. Doubtful statements it holds in suspense, till it has tested their evidence, neither accepting them as true, nor rejecting them as false. It cannot believe in a Supernatural Religion for want of proof that it exists.

Here I would leave a question for our Orthodox friends to answer! How come they to call the New Testament "the Word of God?" a book they know to have been compiled by "*Roman authority*," represented within its boards as *Antichrist*, Thes. II, 1, 10, and the *Beast*," that received its "*power, its seat, and great authority from the Dragon*"—the Devil, Rev. XII, 3, 9, XIII, 1, 8, who with the kings of the earth, the supporters of the Mother of Harlots is described as "at war with the Lamb," XVII, 12, 15, and all to be destroyed by the Christ at his coming, XIX, 17, 20. Why not speak the truth and call it "The Book of Antichrist." And "Rendering unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

NOTES OF SEANCES AT THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE, SANDHURST.

OUR Circle continues its regular bi-weekly sittings as usual, the members taking as deep an interest in the evolution of the wonderful phenomena, which from time to time come through their medium, as ever. The medium himself, I am happy to say, enjoys the best of health, and, excepting when entranced at the seances, is never troubled by his controls; in fact, as soon as the seances are over, he never seems to trouble his head any more on the subject. This is a happy trait in connection with his mediumship as it saves him from much of the annoyances to which too many of the mediums are subjected, and enables him to attend with punctuality to his every-day avocations.

Until lately we have not made so much progress this year as we did during the latter part of last year; but we have noticed that it was about the same time last season as this that the manifestations became more powerful and convincing, which has set us all thinking as to whether the very hot weather does not retard and weaken the power. Be this as it may, our seances have very much improved within the last month or two, and very marked progress has been made with the materialisation of the spirit-form. The most successful seance as well as the most gratifying, was held on Friday the 11th June. The night being wet no ladies were present, and only six gentlemen. Still it was a most harmonious circle. After prayer and singing, all hands being joined and the medium entranced, King's light appeared and as usual was covered with drapery. In a little, as it became more luminous, a small, draped figure gradually came into view, reclining on the right of the medium, and the latter also being quite visible to all and quietly

seated in his chair. Both were seen at the same moment, the head of the figure apparently bare, and a very pale face being seen for the first time. In a little the light became obscured, the medium drawing it towards him as if for more, and then, as it again became luminous, there was seen by all present, a tall heavily draped man, with a large black beard, sharp nose and regular features, and with a hooded turban on his head, standing a little to the front and on the right of the medium, and the latter seen quietly seated in his chair. The Vice-chairman reported that he was certain the spirit held the light in his own hand, as it being next to him he could see its hand quite well. The Chairman in his joy at the beautiful and convincing manifestations exclaimed, "With such proofs under our strict test conditions too, as this, no cabinet is required." The circle one and all thanked King and our spirit band for what they had done that night. George Abell (the spirit through whom direct writing is given) then manifested, and stated that they wished the circle to be very punctual and harmonious. They were in harmony that night, and the result they had all been witnesses of. The conditions of success were mainly with themselves. On Sunday the 13th June, ten members were present, but though the manifestations were of a similar character to those of Friday, they were neither as powerful nor so satisfactory. An instructive article was read by the chairman from the pen of the late Judge Edmonds, on "Intercourse with spirits of the living," and Miss F. played several fine airs on the organ. King's light shortly afterwards became visible, and the small draped figure on the right of the medium came into view. It appeared to some about the size of a child, and to others larger than usual. King shortly afterwards was seen standing up, and the medium with his hand passing the phosphorescent light up and down his (King's) draped form from head to foot. There was unquestionably a full-length dress of white drapery, but we all thought only the head and face of the spirit was materialised. The features were but dimly seen at this seance. Last night (the 18th June) two lady and four gentlemen members were present, the night being most inclement and a thick misty rain falling at the time. The manifestations were very similar to those of Friday last, only King wore a large round twisted turban on his head, and seemed to be formed as far as the waist. He appeared to be floating, as at one time he was on a level with the medium as he appeared seated in his chair, and in a second or two after was much taller. I saw the medium with his arm extended towards King and holding the light up to him, King being about an arm's length from him. King, before going,—per the entranced medium— informed the circle that, in consequence of the irregularity in their attendance lately, a certain matter which had been for some time promised, was further delayed. The seance then closed.

Permit me for the information of friends at a distance and to save me much letter writing, to inform you and them that no visitors can be admitted for some time yet. Sandhurst, 19th June, 1875. THE CHAIRMAN.

MR. TYERMAN.

MR. TYERMAN has just returned to Sydney from Brisbane, where he has raised quite a ferment of Freethought, and terribly alarmed the clergy of that city. He delivered lectures every night for a week to large audiences, and his two Sunday meetings are said to have been the largest ever held in Brisbane, and composed principally of the most respectable and intelligent citizens. Mr. Tyerman having invited questions after the lecture, a number were put by his opponents, but the cross-examination only eliciting evidence against them, they desisted after the first few nights, and took to abuse him in the evangelical paper and in their own churches. One of the articles was so scurrilous that Mr. Tyerman felt it incumbent on him to castigate the author severely during his last Sunday lecture, which so enraged the Rev. scribe that he waited upon Mr. T. (accompanied by a lay friend) to demand an explanation. The explanation they got, however, was not what they expected, and they went away considerably crestfallen. A local Freethought Association (the result of Mr. Tyerman's efforts) is in

the course of formation, and another edition of Mr. Tyerman's collection of Hymns are in the press, for use there and at Sydney.

MR. CHARLES BRIGHT.

Mr. Bright delivered the last of his series of lectures, (for the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists), at the Temperance Hall Russell Street, on Sunday, June 6th. In spite of the inclemency of the weather, the Hall was filled with an earnest and rather enthusiastic auditory. The preliminary reading was from Gregg's "Creed of Christendom" after which Mr. Bright briefly reviewed his twelve preceeding lectures, and then said he purposed referring to the Criticisms they had evoked from the local denominational Journals:—

First he would draw attention to a paragraph which appeared in the *Southern Cross*, which he believed was edited by Dr. Cameron, who certainly knew more of his affairs than he did himself. (Laughter.) Possibly it was inspiration. (Laughter.)

"Mr. Charles Bright," it said, "must be a very interesting study to those who are addicted to the pursuit of what may be called human natural history. He looks up longingly at the respect and influence enjoyed by the clergy, and thinking how ill a deserving man like himself has fared in comparison, he consoles himself by crying sour grapes with truly vulpine uncton. It is only the weak who enter the ranks of the ministry, he says, and to a man of intellectual vigour anything the church could offer would be an exceedingly poor reward. If that be so, we must congratulate Mr. Bright on the escape he made not so many years ago. His ambition then was to edit a religious periodical, published by one of our leading denominations, and but for the want of discernment on the part of the heads of that church, he might now be serving and defending one of the 'weaker sexes' as he facetiously styles the clergy. That humility which is so touchingly manifest in all his utterances must at that time have completely got the better of him, and we are glad to see that he has since—after much struggling, doubtless—brought his excessive virtue within reasonable bounds."

That cause must be a bad one which required to be propped up by misrepresentation. There was not one atom of truth in that paragraph. (Applause) He knew nothing of this religious journal; he was quite sure he should have made it very extraordinary for the readers of it. (Laughter.) Since 18, he might say 16, years of age, he had been a free thinker. His scepticism was excited by seeing the God he was desirous of worshipping reported as such a fearful deity as He was in the Bible, and his doubts increased until he was 21, when a relative of his own gave him "Paine's Age of Reason" to read. He was going in an express train from Leamington to London, and moment by moment the horizon began to clear, and he could think of God without thinking of Him as debased by the attributes generally applied to Him. He then met another friend, who said, "Now you have accomplished the work of destruction—you must begin to build up," and he recommended him to read Theodore Parker and Francis Newman. He had only referred to this extract to show the way in which orthodox clergymen fought an unorthodox foe. There was a command which said something about bearing false witness. He thought it might apply in this case. In a subsequent article which appeared in the same paper, in reference to his lecture on "Infallibility," it was stated:—

"There are some assertions in these three columns that fairly startle us, coming as they do from a man with some literary reputation. Take one instance merely.—During the whole of those centuries (the period of the Old Testament history) we have scarcely any trace of secular literature." "All was sanctified." Surely Mr. Bright's tongue or his memory must have slipped, for he cannot be ignorant of the many references to secular literature contained in the Old Testament, or of the opinion of many scholars that actually some fragments of it are preserved."

In that lecture what he stated was, that we had no literature preserved from certain ages and a particular race but that which was made sacred. No doubt there was a quantity of literature that was not preserved, but in a time when it was difficult to preserve literature, and very little was committed to paper or stone, as the case might be, all that was preserved was made sacred, or semi-sacred, like the apocrypha. In the *Southern Cross* of the previous day there was a long article, which towards its close said,

"Freethinkers scoff at the missions, and laugh at all the efforts that have been and are being made for the raising up of the heathen of the Southern Seas to some sort of Christian knowledge and faith."

The fact that these missions were condemned was not because they were fruitful of good to the heathen, but because they were not; and moreover because there were so many heathen close to our own doors more needing these missions. The article alluded to Bishop Patteson. Bishop Patteson was doubtless a brave man, and as he risked his life in doing what he considered to be his duty, he was a noble man. But might they not think that his life could have been turned to better purposes? The article then went on to say:—

"Against such things the gospel of Free Thought has to show—what? The atrocities of the Carl, the doings of such men as Murray, and Mount and Morris."

Heavens, free thought liable for that! Why, Dr. Murray was a religious man. Did he not write religiously, and speak religiously? They made him a present to the other side completely, and as far as Mount and Morris were concerned, he had no doubt they were trained in the good old orthodox fashion, and if they were, they would have been taught a great deal of what they did. ("Oh," and a laugh.) There was a vast deal of good in the Bible, which he could use; he could dispense with what he believed to be evil; but those who believed the Bible to be inspired must take every word of it, and what did it say in Leviticus xxv. 44, &c.:—

"Thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever; but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour."

And then again Exodus xxi, 20—

"And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished, for he is his money."

Now, how dare any one lay to the charge of freedom of thought the proceedings of these men, when by the very book they worshipped rules of this kind were laid down? (Applause.) Moreover, he would ask who it was in America, when slavery existed in the Southern States, raised manliest voice against the horror of it, and who was perpetually attacking the Government of the day in reference to it, but the apostle of free thought, Theodore Parker? (Applause.) The free-thinkers were against slavery all along, and it was abolished under the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, a free thought man and a spiritualist. (Applause.) He would refer now to a passage in another paper, edited by the Rev. Mr. Symons—the *Spectator*—which represented the Wesleyan body. In an article of May 8th it stated,

"Mr. Bright proceeded to show that while the Scriptures were unreliable, contradictory, and altogether unworthy the belief of men of his mental calibre, the glorious philosophy of the table-rappists was the only system worthy the credence of lofty intelligences. The oracles that commend themselves to his reason are not the divine ones, but the thumping of the legs of tables and chairs on the floor."

Now he begged to say that he thought as little of the thumping of the legs of tables and chairs as any one else, but if it could disclose any new law of nature, it was a question which science alone could answer—(hear)—and one which would never be answered by ridicule. After reading further from the article, he said he pleaded guilty to its charges. He did not know, as it stated, whether he "grewed" like Topsy, whence he came or whither he was going. It was the one marvel, but he did not believe that he was fashioned by mechanical process out of the dust of the ground. He might have come out of the dust of the ground, but it must have been by a process of natural law, and he did not believe that the ladies came out of one of his or Adam's ribs. (Laughter.) It was doubtless a fact that he did stand in living wonder, but not in a "fog." He had a wider view than those who thought they knew all about it. They remained in a black cave, hollowed out of the rock of superstition in the remote past, with

the light of the little farthing rushlights before its altars, while those who loved freedom went forth into the open air and saw the illimitable distances. They knew nothing about the attributes of the Infinite Being best spoken of by the one name Unknown, and the consequence was they were treated as men walking in a fog, and were dubbed atheists. Having read an extract from Fichte on this point, he said he confessed he would rather remain in doubt with men like Fichte, Greg, and Carlyle, than be wrapped up in complete certainty with Dr. Cameron and Mr. Symons. (Applause.) In the *Spectator* of May 22 occurred a long article, which specially dealt with the remarks he made touching Shelley and his divine nature. He had not time to go into it, but he asked those who had read that article to read also and compare with it an article from a very impartial authority, the *Penny Cyclopædia*. The article in the *Spectator* was as one-sided as it could possibly be—was in many respects untrue, and well worthy of the tactics of the school from which it proceeded. He then read the end of the article, which stated that he concluded his "foolish address" with a good Christian sentiment, which he presented as an original truth which had been left for infidelity to discover, in reference to which he remarked that he had never from that platform said one word against Christianity. He had spoken many words against the creeds which represented themselves as Christian (applause), but not one word against Christianity. The article said he made use of a Christian sentiment. He hoped so, for it had been almost the sole purpose of his lectures to advance Christian sentiments against un-Christian creeds. (Applause.) An article entitled "Easy Chair" in yesterday's *Spectator* directly called for an answer. It said:—

It is a most wholesome experience now and again to have one's faith described by an enemy; and on this principle I spent last Sunday evening in listening to Mr. Charles Bright, at the Temperance-hall. I was amused to find how much our opponents borrow from us. The "service" began with a hymn, and the "Old Hundredth" went swelling up, though in rather a gasping and asthmatic fashion. Congregational singing is by no means a strong point with Mr. Bright's followers."

Now, he had nothing to do with that, and he was sure it was not true any more than any there would like to call themselves his followers.

"The collection was announced somewhat unfairly before the sermon."

(Laughter.) He thought that was an unfair practice that orthodoxy would soon be adopting. (Great laughter.) Mark this. It might appeal to some of them:—

"The collection was announced, somewhat unfairly, before the sermon, and as the plate came past me it showed the same miraculous abundance of threepenny bits we are so familiar with in our church vestries. (Continued laughter.) As I looked round on the faces of the hearers, they seemed to me to be by no means of the ordinary church-going class; yet I observed these 'pioneers of humanity' had one touch of nature in common with their priest-ridden brethren at that moment listening to orthodox sermons in various churches. They know how to make dull discourse tolerable by intermittent and judicious naps."

Now he was sure that was a libel. (More merriment.) He never saw an audience more wide awake. (Great laughter.) The critic then went on to one or two small points in which he said his (Mr. Bright's) address was incorrect, and by the smallness of the points they would see how little he had to find fault with:—

"I was surprised at some slips which showed that Mr. Bright's information is more patchy than I had imagined. He talked about miracles wrought by Moses in the land of Judea, called Strauss a great living theologian, and described Father Newman of the Brompton Oratory, as 'the head of a Catholic educational establishment.'"

With regard to the first, he was quoting from Strauss, who referred to "the miracles wrought by Moses and the prophets and apostles in Judea," meaning, no doubt, any place where the Jews were. With regard to speaking of Strauss as a living theologian, he pleaded guilty to the soft impeachment. It was not until he was thinking over the matter at home that he remembered Strauss had been dead about a year and a half; and with regard to Dr. Newman, he might be permitted to say that he had established a school for the higher education of Roman Catholics, which was under his supervision. After reading the conclusion of the article, he said, in reply to the criticism contained

therein, that he owned he was "his own prophet and Pope," but it was to a congregation limited to one. He was his own prophet and his own Pope so far as himself was concerned, but he would trench on no other man's freedom of opinion, nor would he denounce any other man's opinion as carrying him to perdition, neither would he attempt to wield the bolts of heaven against those who were not of his way of thinking. What he said was, "Let each man think what he thinks fit so long as he thinks for himself, and not be told that he cannot speak out, because, forsooth, other persons do not like it." Referring to a statement that Christians were described as poor creed-bound slaves, but that "Creed" meant simply that which was believed, Mr. Bright said he took it that creed, as ordinarily understood, was something more than belief—it was belief with a penalty hanging to it—it was "Thus saith the Lord, and if you don't believe it you shall be damned." Let every man form his own belief, but writers of this class made the term Christian applicable only to a man of their own form of belief. After reading the conclusion of the article, which expressed surprise at the swarming crowds that filled the Temperance Hall, he said he believed they came because they there heard outspoken the truths which most of them had felt within their hearts for a long time. (Tremendous applause.) What was the use of the sectarian teaching that was usually given, or of all the creeds and confessions ever framed? Was not the simple creed of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity sufficient? (Applause.) They did not for an instant disregard Christianity, but for their Christianity they preferred to go to the fountain head, and he would just read what that fountain head said in Matthew, chap. xix. :—

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' And he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' He saith unto him, 'which?' Jesus said, 'Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The young man saith unto him, 'All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?' Jesus said unto him, 'If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come and follow me.'"

There was nothing, then, in the commandments which was specially picked out about closing our libraries and picture galleries on Sunday—(great applause)—not one word there about justification by faith; not one word there about the extraordinary doctrine of the Trinity; not one word in favour of any of the recondite scholasticisms which now went under the name of Christianity. If they went to the fountain head they might well style themselves Christians. Mr. Bright concluded by acknowledging in humorous terms various tracts and texts of Scripture which had been sent him. —*Argus, June 7th.*

THE "TRUTHSEEKER" ON SPIRITUALISM.

In the Inquiry Department of the *Truthseeker* for March (an excellent Monthly Journal edited by the Rev. John Page Hopps,) we observe the following editorial answer to a question in reference to Spiritualism :—

"S. W." asks whether "Spiritualism" throws any light on Immortality. Of course it does, *if Spirit Communion can be proved*. On that subject, as on all others, we are only seekers after the truth. There is a great deal about it that we do not relish, and that we cannot at all understand; but it is all plain and pleasant compared with the attitude of science-men like Mr. Huxley, on the one hand, and religious people on the other. As to these last, it appears to us that their bitter opposition to Spiritualism indicates a very hazy faith in Immortality. Why should people who profess to believe that the "dead" are not dead pour scorn or indignation upon other people who say they can prove it? The sorrowful truth is that much of what passes for faith in a future life is only a sentimental habit of feeling. People who talk solemnly or sentimentally about the "immortality of the soul" are startled when others talk about men

women, and children in a real world beyond, behind, above, and within the world of dust and ashes. Why are they startled? Is a "soul" only a sentiment, or a flimsy "shade," or a ghastly jet of gas? We do not absolutely know yet what the solid facts about "Spiritualism" are, but we feel tolerably sure that they who can prove the reality of Spirit Communion will accomplish or begin the mightiest religious revolution of this or any other time.

"But is it not all trickery, and have not the tricksters been already found out here and there?" Perhaps so; but for every trickster caught, there are a hundred thousand people who say, "We know this thing is true." Bad shillings may be villainous pewter, and deserve nailing down, but they do not prove there are no silver shillings. On the contrary, the counterfeit bears oblique witness to the true. It may be so with Spiritualism.

"But such unworthy and irreligious things are said to be done by the spirits!" True, but, though we are as easily disgusted with nonsense as most people, we feel that facts are facts whether they be unworthy or grand, ridiculous or dignified; and facts are precisely what we want. Whether we are going to get facts in evidence is an open question; but we feel that it will not do to utterly ignore or to contemptuously dismiss the testimony of the millions who testify that in their houses or their laboratories they have come upon the boundaries and the inhabitants of another world.

J. M. PEEBLES IN GROW'S OPERA HOUSE.

(From the "Religio-Philosophical Journal.")

DEATH AND THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

MOURNING AND FUNERALS.

THE EMPLOYMENTS OF SPIRITS.

Mr. Peebles' lectures at Grow's Opera Hall, have attracted large and enthusiastic audiences, to listen to his burning words of eloquence. Indeed it seemed like old times, to witness such a large assemblage of Spiritualists. After reading, singing and an invocation, the speaker announced the text :—

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death."—Rev. xxi: 4.

It is no more certain that the term creation must give place to evolution, than that the word death must be superseded by birth—birth into the better land. Life and death are but links in the endless chain of being—musical ripples upon the measureless ocean of existence.

As effects do not exceed their causes,—streams rise higher than their fountains, and "nothings" becomes "somethings;" so conscious souls do not develop up out of unconscious matter. From the isolated lesser, the greater does not ultimate. Souls, or atomic soul-germs are pre-existent and partied portions of God—the Infinite Over-Soul! Parents give the conditions for the incarnation. And accordingly this life is a temporary hotel wherein mortals tarry a little season for rudimental experiences. Earthly furniture is not transferable to immortality. A superabundance of this world's goods proves a moral millstone in the future state of existence. Each individual should live in the physical organism as long as possible for observation and experience, ripening through toil and suffering.

Human beings die not because of Adam's sin, or Jonah's gourd; but because their bodies are mortal, and it is an inexorable law that all physically organized beings must in their time and turn become disorganized. As the butterfly's folded wing in its rudimentary state, may be traced under the shell of the chrysalis, so the whole future resurrectional body is wrapped up within, permeating the material form. And death so-called is the release, the separation of the physical and spiritual bodies. That is, as the physical birth of the infant is death to its placenta envelope, so birth into spirit-life is death to the physical casket; and as the process is natural and beautiful, it involves no disorganization of the spiritual body. Clairvoyants should be careful not to mistake the vapory cloud-like aural atmosphere around and above the dying and the already dead, for the spiritual body, *per se*, in a condition of fragmentary chaos.

about to assume shape and consciousness. Both analogy and the testimony of spirits are against this notion. The soul is the divine magnet that holds the spiritual body to itself in a continuous organized unity. Disorganizations and disintegrations pertain to the mortal, rather than spiritual bodies, or spiritual beings. Study nature.

In spring-time the bird weaving a nest in the garden evergreen, deposits her eggs. As the embryo bird develops—expands, it becomes uneasy and restless. The shell is too small and the confined bird struggles for release. The hatching is the dying—death is the disintegration to the shell—but birth and freedom to the bird.

THE PROCESS OF DYING,

especially in old age is natural and painless. The groans, throes and spasms only index the strugglings of the spiritual man to burst away from the mortal vesture. "Oh, that I had strength to hold a pen," said the eminent Wm. Hunter in his last hours, "I would write how easy, how delightful it is to die."

Those who have lived pure, truthful and charitable lives, do not lose their consciousness even for a moment during the transition. They pass from a shaded and darkened room of earth, to a brilliant illuminated mansion of the Father.

THE UNBORN INFANT IS IMMORTAL

from the sacred moment of embryonic existence. In marital life when the positive and negative relational forces blend, then and there is deposited the soul-germ—the future man. Nature takes no retrogressive steps. If the bud is blasted and violently torn from the maternal tree of life, the crime is manifest. Designed abortions are murders! Physicians are often abettors in the criminality of fœticide, and many parents will meet their murdered children in the land of compensative justice.

Philosophically speaking,

THERE ARE NO IDIOTS.

The so-called idiotic "blind Tom" excels in music, and has many rational conceptions of right and wrong. Visiting the "New York State Asylum for Idiots," at Syracuse, the speaker saw those originally called idiots, read, write and solve problems,—saw their gymnastic exercises, and heard them sing. To the spiritual vision there are no idiots. The God-atom—the divine soul-germ, centered in the brain, owing to some derangement, or malformation of the nervo-organization is unable to make normal manifestations. The idiotic—the weak-minded of earth, enter the Spirit-world as infants, commencing the upward march in knowledge and wisdom. Death, is one step up higher, offering better facilities to all grades and classes of humanity. And spirit-life is an active life; a social life; a retributive life; a constructive and a progressive life. Reason and affection, conscience and memory go with us into the future state of existence.

Sectarian churchmen entertain the most

GLOOMY FOREBODINGS OF DEATH.

The Rev. J. G. Smith, Baptist clergyman of New York, published his doubts in these words, "Death chills every fibre of my being, I do not even see through a glass darkly. I have hope in Christ; but the future looks dark and I will not disguise the fact."

When Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe buried, several years since, the form of a promising son, she wrote thus, "Who shall roll us the stone away from the door of the sepulchre?" There it lies, cold, hard inexorable, the stone of silence—since the beginning of the world, there it has been; no tears have melted it, no prayers pierced it. Nothing about the doom of death is so dreadful as this dead inflexible silence. Could there be after the passage of the river, one backward signal—one last word, the heart would be appeased.

A late New York *Observer* has this: "Almost every one has at least one lock of hair cut from the head of one now dwelling in that silent land whence come no messages, no letters, no tokens of any kind to tell of love or of remembrance." This is the status of the Christian world. If not "without hope and without God in the world," they are certainly without any knowledge

of a future conscious existence; and may well sing with the Christian poet, Dr. Watts:

"The living know that they must die,
But all the dead forgotten lie,
Their memory and their sense are gone,
Alike unknowing and unknown."

Though orthodox theology will do in a measure to live by, it "will not do to die by." It fails in the dying hour. It remembers the biblical passage, perhaps, in the third Ecclesiastes: "That which befalleth the sons of man, befalleth the beasts; all go unto one place." A young lady of the Episcopal church in Baltimore exclaimed, "I'll never love God any more, I never will, for he has taken away my dear papa." And when they put the ice around the corpse, she shrieked, "Don't, oh! don't put ice on my papa. You'll freeze him; you'll freeze him!" Such wild exclamations reveal the weakness and wickedness of pulpit teachings. Wisely said Socrates, "The body is not the man."

MOURNING AND MARRIAGE,

in this age of sham and frivolous externalities, require enormous outfits. When the daughter of the famous W. M. Tweed, New York, was married, the robe, veil, laces and diamonds, cost \$50,000. The magnificence was unparalleled, the presents amounting to over \$700,000. Mr. Tweed is now suffering the extreme penalty of the law! Funerals are nearly as extravagant as weddings. An elegant coffin with silver plating, to hold a putrid cast-off shell, costs from \$500 to \$1,000. It is a useless expense. And then the rich mourning apparel becomes, especially to the poor, an unnecessary burden. The Chinese mourn in white; the Digger Indians of California plaster pitch and ashes on their heads and faces; while Christians drape themselves in black garments, symbols of despair. Crape on the door, crape on the arms, crape on the hats; black gloves, black garments; black coffin; black hearse, black plumes—blackness of darkness! When Spiritualists put on mourning, and conduct funerals in this manner, they should close with the hymn:—

"Hark from the Tombs a doleful sound"

I would see no mourning vestures worn, nor hear sad sepulchred-toned voices muttering over the crumbling forms of our loved. It should be considered a pleasant duty to consign dust to its dust. The funeral train should move off toward the cemetery in a lively manner. Let the steeds gallop if the day is cold and stormy. A band of music well becomes the soul's march up the love-lands of immortality!

IN THE SPIRIT-LAND

are green meadows; deep, mossy banks; clear meandering streams; stars of diamond beauty; harps of coral gems; schools and lyceums; fields and fountains, gardens and massive libraries—everything to charm, educate and unfold the soul.

Spirits, remembering their own lives on earth, cherish deep and holy sympathies for humanity. Love never forgets. In the morning-time and in the gray of evening, down golden-tided rivers sail these ministering spirits of God to catch the incense of each soul-felt prayer. They come to impress and inspire. Their magnetisms are baptisms, their spirit-echoes of eternal life.

We shall know and love each other there. Memory is the recording angel. Glorious will be the meeting of the loved in heaven, and grand the shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?"

Beautiful and glorious are those homes of mutual love embowered in roses; those palaces of art tinged with electric light; those heavens of scientists, brotherhoods of philanthropists, and congresses of angels—all adding to the beatific glories of life in the republics of immortality.

The depraved, selfish and corrupt go at death Judas-like to their "own place"—the lower spheres. Terrible is the anguish that obtains in the winter-land—the diaka-spheres of immortality. And yet, God is good. Angels minister to the lowest, and "upward all things tend." Progress over there is both possible and certain. In this and the future state of existence, salvation is a process—a soul growth—a blossoming and ripening up

of the spiritual nature. It comes through the *Tau* of the Chinese; the *Bhudda* of the Orientals; the *Logos* of John, and the *Christ* of the New Testament—comes as vegetations, flowers, and golden harvests come through the warmth and light of the sun. This Christ principle is the "savor of life unto life"—the "morning star" of the Apocalypse.

EMPLOYMENT IN HEAVEN

corresponds to soul desires. The future is largely the counterpart of this world only more real and substantial. Poets court the muses there; astronomers measure unseen planets; reformers continue their self-sacrificing work. An intelligent spirit recently said through his medium, "Theodore Parker has drifted on to the rostrum, and twice a week you may see the fair maidens and gallant swains of Spring Garden winding their way to his beautiful home and garden, in the suburbs, where, amid the flowers, he descants to them, in his eloquent way, on life and the attributes of the human soul, and also upon his earth-experiences."

That good practical man, J. J. Glover, of Massachusetts, returning and manifesting, said this of the Spirit-world:—

"I am at present domiciled with my excellent friend Abraham Lincoln, in the beautiful city of Spring Garden. The place contains between sixty and seventy thousand inhabitants, a majority of whom are engaged in literary and artistic pursuits. It might vie with ancient Athens for the wealth of mind which is concentrated within its precincts." * * * *

"Theodore Parker inhabits a villa in the suburbs of the city (Spring Garden) not large, but beautiful; * * * and every day troops of happy spirits go out there to hear him discourse upon some subject, or to ask him to elucidate some question, or to hear from him some of the experiences of his earth-life. He stands out upon his vine-clad balcony, with uncovered head, and discourses there as he never did here, and yet you would know it was the plain Parson of your Music Hall."

Dr. A. P. Hooker said through Mrs. Conant of Boston:—

"I never once supposed that in the other world I should meet with things as natural as here. I never once supposed there would be houses and builders of houses; that there would be trees and flowers and fruit; and ground in which these things were to grow; that there would be sunshine and shade, and all the different varieties in nature, only in an intenser and more glorified sense; but so it is."

"Among other important things, see that you keep yourself free from all moral disease; don't do anything that you will be ashamed of in the other life. Don't shame the Christ principle of your own souls, for if you do you will pay the penalty there. Live as honest, as moral, as clean a life here as it is possible for you to, if you wish to escape these Swedenborgian hells of the other life. Swedenborg I think, had it right when he spoke of the hells of the future life. They are there, and the poor unfortunates are writhing in them."

Frankie C. Partridge, writing from his spirit-home—Paradisia—to his parents says:—"Spirit-life is real; scenes corresponding to those of earth; mountains, valleys clothed in living verdure, lakes, rivers, grains, fruits, flowers, and all that give to life a charm, are here found. Here are seen halls of education and temples of inspiration, where philosophers and prophets entertain multitudes. Community life is the type of social existence in Paradisia. 'Free to all' is the welcome extended to every one who enters the social homes and gardens of Paradisia. * * * My studies thus far have been practical lessons of observation. Spirits in different spheres of use, invite me to travel with them to their fields of labor, and thus I gain knowledge and wisdom."

Spiritualism demonstrates a future conscious existence, and giving us a revised geography of the heavenly spheres,—to those who accept its divine principles, and live calm, beautiful, practical-lives—"there is no death."

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.*

Mr. Wallace's latest contribution to the Literature of Spiritualism is decidedly one of the best among the many excellent volumes that have been added to that literature during the last few years. In a volume of 230 pages the author has condensed a vast amount of logical argument and incontrovertible facts, the careful perusal of which cannot fail to modify the views of the sceptical reader. In a brief preface to the work, Mr. Wallace mentions that in early life he was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. He was so thorough and confirmed a materialist that he could not at that time find a place in his mind for the conception of spiritual existence, or for any other agencies in the universe than matter and force, but facts that came under his notice first aroused his curiosity, and his desire for knowledge and love of truth forced him to continue the enquiry. The author expresses his consciousness that his investigations into and conclusions on this matter have prejudiced his scientific reputation, and alludes to one of his scientific friends (Mr. Anton Dohn) who attributes his divergence from the views of Mr. Darwin to his belief in Spiritualism. Mr. Wallace however denies this, and states his opinion that Spiritualism is consistent with, and adds to, the grand doctrine of evolution through natural selection. On page 4 the author takes exception to Mr. Hume's definition of a miracle as bad and imperfect, and further on points out palpable contradictions in his argument against them. Mr. Wallace gives his definition of a miracle as follows—"Any act or event necessarily implying the existence and agency of superhuman intelligences." This definition, he contends, is more complete than that of Hume's, and defines more accurately the essence of that which is commonly termed a miracle. After pointing out the errors and mistakes of scientific men in dealing with new discoveries, Mr. Wallace ably reviews Mr. Lecky's assertions on miracles, and points out his fallacies, concluding his first essay by showing that the arguments advanced against Spiritualism so far are utterly fallacious.

The second essay is on the "Scientific aspect of the Supernatural." Before presenting his facts the author submits a list of names of persons who have been convinced of the truth and reality of most of the phenomena to be described, and in reference to them says—

"I subjoin a list of the persons whose names I have adduced in the following pages, as having been convinced of the truth and reality of most of these phenomena. I presume it will be admitted that they are *honest* men. If, then, these facts, which many of them declare they have repeatedly witnessed, never took place, I must leave my readers to account for the undoubted *fact* of their belief in them, as best they can. I can only do so by supposing these well-known men to have been all fools or madmen, which is to me more difficult than believing they are sane men, capable of observing matters of fact, and of forming a sound judgment as to whether or no they could possibly have been deceived in them. A man of sense will not lightly declare, as many of these do, not only that he has witnessed what others deem absurd and incredible, but that he feels morally certain he was not deceived in what he saw."

LIST.

1. Professor A. DE MORGAN—Mathematician and Logician.
2. Professor CHALLIS—Astronomer.
3. Professor WM. GREGORY, M.D.—Chemist.
4. Professor ROBERT HARE, M.D.—Chemist.
5. Professor HERBERT MAYO, M.D., F.R.S.—Physiologist.
6. Mr. RUTTER—Chemist.
7. Dr. ELLIOTSON—Physiologist.
8. Dr. HADDOCK—Physician.
9. Dr. GULLY—Physician.
10. Judge EDMONDS—Lawyer.
11. Lord LYNTHURST—Lawyer.
12. CHARLES BRAY, Philosophical Writer.
13. Archbishop WHATELY—Clergyman.
14. Rev. W. KERR, M.A.—Clergyman.
15. Hon. Col. E. B. WILBRAHAM—Military Man.
16. Captain R. F. BURTON—Military Man.
17. NASSAU E. SENIOR—Political Economist.
18. W. M. THACKERAY—Author.
19. T. A. TROLLOPE—Author.
20. R. D. OWEN—Author and Diplomatist.
21. W. HOWITT—Author.
22. S. C. HALL—Author.

On page 36 the author refers to the common fallacy in the many arguments against facts deemed miraculous.

* Miracles and Modern Spiritualism, Three Essays, by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.S., author of "The Malay Archipelago," "Contributions to the theory of Natural Selection," &c., &c. London: JAS. BURNS.

* Those accustomed to investigate with well-developed mediums, are favoured with an almost equal certainty and regularity of the phenomena. The objections raised against mediums are often unnecessary, and sometimes malicious.

distinction between the spirit and her medium. A difference in the features is apparent, and the spirit-form stands a few inches higher than Miss Cook. A long series of photographs of "Katie" were shown, taken in a variety of attitudes, some of them very expressive and classical and all of them beautiful specimens of photographic art by means of the electric light. The conversation on the phenomena which have been so frequently observed in these apartments indicated that Mr. Crookes, in his published reports, has very much underdrawn the picture, and that much more might be added to amplify the facts and add to the evidences whereby the absolute certainty of these recorded experiments may be established.

The electrical apparatus for testing the mediumship of Mrs. Fay was then carefully explained. On a shelf under the side-board on which the apparatus was fixed stood the battery of two cells. The "shunt," externally a small mahogany box, was placed in the immediate front of the sideboard to the left. The "resistance-coils" of similar appearance stood to the right. Behind the shunt was the galvanometer, and behind the resistance-coils a lantern, the light from which fell on the galvanometer, and was reflected from thence to a broad graduated scale, which was placed horizontally on its edge to the right of the resistance-coils, and at a right angle with the sideboard, and so constituted the extreme right of the apparatus opposite to the galvanometer on the left. Two wires passed from the apparatus through the side of the doorway to the corner of the library immediately behind the wall. These wires were supplied with handles of the ordinary kind, and when these were grasped with the wetted hands the electrical circuit was established; when the handles were liberated the current was broken. A young gentleman grasped the handles and enabled Mr. Crookes to explain the use of the experiment as a test of mediumship. Before the handles were touched the streak of light reflected from the galvanometer stood at zero on the graduated scale, but as soon as the gentleman took hold of the poles the streak of light rapidly flashed up to about 220 divisions, or a space of several inches, and it stood there steadily till the handles were released, when it promptly returned to zero again. With this explanation the most casual observer could understand that it was impossible for a medium thus placed in circuit to release the hands even for an instant without the spectators in view of the instrument knowing it. There was also another test—the readings from the resistance-coils. When there was no one in circuit—that is, when the handles were not grasped, the resistance was infinite, as there was no current, but as soon as someone took hold of the handles the apparatus showed how many units of resistance the electrical current had to overcome in passing through the medium's body from pole to pole. The streak of light on the scale and the units of resistance worked in unison with each other, so that the check open to two classes of observers was complete. It was further explained that if the medium gently slid both of the handles into one hand, that the circuit would be shortened, the resistance consequently lessened, which would be at once indicated by the streak of light going farther up the scale, and the units of resistance being accordingly lessened. If, again, the two brass handles were made to come absolutely together, "short circuit" would be established—the streak of light would flash off the scale entirely, and the resistance of the medium's body to the current would be entirely withdrawn, to which the resistance-coils would at once testify. It may be mentioned, however, that the handles held by the medium were fastened back so that they could not be got together or taken hold of by one hand.

Having finished these explanations, the library was minutely examined and prepared for the seance. Had Mr. Crookes used such precautions in the house of the most ardent Spiritualist he would have possibly subjected himself to some little umbrage for so doing. Every corner was looked into, the fastenings of the window-shutters were shown, the door into the hall was locked and sealed with Mr. Bergheim's seal. These precautions were not undertaken with the view of ridiculing the

test-conditions usually imposed at seances, but in the most serious and conscientious manner to leave no opening unclosed whereby suspicions as to the nature of the phenomena might enter. The windows would have been sealed also, but after much expostulation from his guests, Mr. Crookes ultimately gave way, but from the remains of wax and paper we could see that the shutters had been sealed on previous occasions. The windows overlook a front garden and wide area, separated from the busy thoroughfare by a heavy iron railing, so that an entrance by the windows would be not only a difficult feat, but highly dangerous, as the experimenter might find himself in the hands of the police.

These precautions made a very favourable impression on the minds of those present, and the earnest spirit of scientific accuracy in which they were undertaken we should like to see imitated by all who make similar arrangements. The construction of the "desk" marked in the diagram was particularly shown. It is of the kind called monocleid (one-keyed). When shut it somewhat resembles in form a cottage-piano, it being twice as broad as the desk level as in the upper portion. In our diagram it is shown open, but on the sloping desk being raised, it shuts with a self-acting lock, and the smaller doors in the upper part and the drawers in the lower part are thereby locked also. Of course one key, as the name of the style of desk implied, opens the whole; and as it is a Bramah lock, with the only key in Mr. Crookes's possession, it is impossible to pick the lock or open it by a duplicate key. The desk was left shut, with a heavy musical-box on the ledge. A violin was placed on the table, and the library-ladder was left resting against the further wall of the room.

These preliminaries being completed, Mrs. Fay entered, and the seance commenced. The handles of the apparatus were wrapped with cloths soaked in salt solution. Mrs. Fay then took her seat in the chair, the library being left in darkness, except a little light from the fire. The spectators stood in a circle round the apparatus in the laboratory. Before the curtain in the doorway was drawn, Mrs. Fay was asked by Mr. Crookes to grasp the handles. She did so at fifteen minutes past ten o'clock. The streak of light in the scale at once ran up from zero to 221 divisions, and Mr. Crookes, assisted by Mr. Bergheim, read the amount of resistance at 5,600 B.A.* units. Mr. Crookes returned for a moment to the library to see if Mrs. Fay was indeed in her proper place, and the report was satisfactory. Mrs. Fay was thus shown to be in circuit; the curtains were adjusted, and the phenomena commenced almost immediately. Sounds were heard, the lid of the musical-box was slapped, it was heard being wound up, and it commenced playing, but was stopped by the spirits to show their power over the mechanism. The violin which had been left on the table was seen to protrude from the side of the curtains. It was taken hold of by Mr. Burns, who stood close to the curtain and, indeed, within three feet of Mrs. Fay. A bell was heard ringing behind the curtain, and immediately a delicate little hand was seen by the edge of the curtain, holding the bell, which was dropped before the eyes of the spectators. The fingers moved for a short time, as if to attract attention.

The seance had now lasted just five minutes, when the reading of the apparatus was recorded. Time, 10.20. The streak of light stood on the scale at 222 divisions, and the resistance was 5,636 B.A. units. The light on the scale appeared to stand steady all the time, but careful observation determined that it had moved over one division, a space smaller than the degree on a thermometer, and close attention on the part of experienced observers revealed the fact that a gentle pulsation was noticeable in the streak of light, due to Mrs. Fay's breathing. Had Mrs. Fay attempted to move her hands so as to alter the connection of her hands with the poles, this movement of the light would have been so decided as to have indicated the fact. No sooner were these observations made than the library-ladder was pushed from behind the curtain amongst the feet of the spectators. This was rapidly followed by a volume of

* British Association Units, a scale of computation well known to scientific men.

the "Proceedings of the American Pharmaceutical Association," a book of 650 pages, which had been taken from a shelf in the library. Time was scarcely permitted to accurately record these phenomena when a slight jingle was heard near Mrs. Fay, and the streak of light on the scale flashed down to zero, indicating that the circuit was broken. Mr. Crookes called to Mrs. Fay, but no answer was given in response. He quickly went into the library, and found Mrs. Fay reclining in her chair in a fainting condition, and of course the handles were dropped. In a few minutes she was restored, when the library was at once lighted up fully, and the company entered. The first thing observed was that the desk we have described was open. The door was down as when used for writing, and on it was found a heavily-framed photograph, which before the seance hung on the wall between the windows, and a mirror and porcelain bottle from the mantelshelf. Several of the drawers were pulled out, and the smaller doors of the upper cabinet were opened. This was regarded as the most extraordinary result of the seance, for had Mrs. Fay, or anyone else, been at liberty, it would have been quite impossible to have opened this desk without the key.

The seance lasted in all about seven or eight minutes. Mrs. Fay's fainting condition was attributed to the fact of her being in a very delicate state from want of rest and previous sittings that day, and she is not very robust at any time. A great deal of power had also been taken from her in a very short time; and, the medium being isolated, there was no opportunity for the spirit to draw from the circle. These circumstances are supposed to produce the rapid exhaustion which ends in faintness on the part of the medium, and prevents the seance from being extended. Whatever may have occasioned this condition of the medium, it was demonstrated that the phenomena occurred while Mrs. Fay was in her proper place, and holding the handles; and, further, it was made certain that the phenomena described were not produced by any human power. The room was searched after the seance, and the seals on the door were unbroken. This test not only establishes the nature of Mrs. Fay's phenomena as usually exhibited, but there must be added the materialisation of at least one hand, which was seen to throw the bell into the laboratory during the seance.

Mrs. Fay placed herself absolutely at the disposal of the company, and imposed no condition whatever as to holding of hands, singing, moving about, or personal protection. There was sufficient light from the fire in the library to see every movement by opening the curtain and peeping through had there been any grounds for suspicion. The whole experiment was in the highest degree satisfactory to medium, scientific observers, and the visitors. The electrical test is not at all painful or inconvenient to the medium, nor do any ill effects follow from the exhaustion of power. Mr. Crookes is so considerate and gentle to everyone, that be he medium, sceptic, Spiritualist, or spirit, the guest for the time being is sure to be at his ease. This we think it needful to state, to disabuse the minds of those who regard the scientific man as the pronounced enemy of spiritualistic experiments, a terror to mediums, and a source of annoyance to the experienced Spiritualist. We must say that we witnessed nothing of the kind, but exactly the opposite. The time and attention which Mr. Crookes has bestowed on these phenomena render him one of the most munificent promoters of the truth respecting them. Time and material have been lavishly spent in a manner highly deserving of generous recognition.

We conclude this report with a synopsis of the manifestations witnessed; which no mortal could possibly take the slightest part therein.

The musical-box was opened, wound up, stopped, and set agoing.

A bell was carried about ringing, and ultimately pushed through, by the side of the curtain, from the library in which the medium sat into the laboratory occupied by the spectators.

The materialised hand which carried the bell was seen; it remained for an instant, moving the fingers to attract attention.

A violin was carried from the table in a distant part of the library into the laboratory.

The library-ladder was carried in a similar manner.

A volume was also carried. These articles were not tossed or thrown, but placed with precision and slowly.

The monocleid desk was opened without any key.

A framed photograph from the wall, and a mirror and bottle from the mantelshelf, were placed on the desk.

Several drawers were pulled out, and small cabinet-doors opened.

These phenomena took place in a room that had been rigidly searched, the door locked and sealed, and the medium, Mrs. Fay, in electrical circuit, so that she could not move her hands, nor go away from the place which she occupied.

THE TESTIMONY OF MR. CROOKES.

Dear Mr. Burns,—I return the proof. I think it gives a very fair account of the facts which occurred at my house on the evening of the 25th of February.—Truly yours,

WILLIAM CROOKES.

20, *Mornington Road, London, N.W.*, March 11, 1875.

A SEANCE WITH MESSRS. BASTIAN AND TAYLOR.

We have been favored by Mr. Stow with the following account of a seance with the celebrated Mediums Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, which was held at 2 Vernon Place, Holborn, March 10th., 1875.

On the evening of the day above mentioned, I had the great pleasure of being present at a seance with Mr. Bastian, a physical medium of excellent order.

In the first place it will be of some interest to your readers, if this gentleman is described, as it will at once be seen that the external appearances of mediums are as widely different as it is possible to conceive. Many will remember the renowned medium Mr. Foster is stout and of lymphatic temperament. Mr. Herne, of London, resembles him very much indeed, and contrasts wonderfully with Mr. Williams, who is thin and delicate, of nervous sanguine habit. Again, Mr. Bastian is unlike either; is tall, thin, and sickly looking, long black hair, dark eyes, of bilious temperament, yet extremely nervous; a man of very few words, polite, gentlemanly, very open, and gives one an impression of truthfulness.

Mr. Taylor's name is coupled with that of Mr. Bastian, yet so far as physical phenomena are concerned, has no part with him. He is said to be a very good clairvoyant, but of this I cannot speak; not having myself witnessed any manifestations of his power. He sits in the circle with the investigators.

At eight o'clock, 22 persons were present, and were placed in a circle (without a table,) by Mr. Taylor—an empty chair was left in the centre, which was afterwards occupied by the medium, Mr. Bastian. About his chair on the floor were placed a musical box, weighing about 16 lbs, a metal speaking trumpet and a small hand bell. Upon the knees of one in the circle, was placed a guitar. When all was ready, Mr. Bastian took his seat in the centre of the circle, and requested two gentlemen to take a candle and make a complete examination of the adjoining room, windows, doors, boxes, &c., &c., and see if every thing was right.

I was one, and with the other carefully examined the whole place, locked the doors, and marked them, so that no person could come in without us knowing it. I am convinced that there was no person in the rooms but those taking part in the seance, and that there was no means for any one to get into the room, and further, that there was no visible means to produce the phenomena, which afterwards took place; which I had to state to the circle.

The light was then put out, and Mr. Bastian commenced to clap his hands which he did not cease to do, until the gas was relit. We joined in singing a hymn, when the guitar was taken by unseen hands, conveyed round and round the room just above our heads, playing in harmony with the tune we were singing. Spirit-hands were felt by most of those sitting.

Next the Musical box was wound up, and set going by our Spirit friends, it also, like the guitar, was carried round the room. The direct voice speaking through the tube was very distinct. The spirit recognised several persons to whom he spoke in a very pleasant and familiar manner. It was indeed hard to realize that there was any difference between the bodied and disembodied intelligences before me. During nearly an hour the spirits continued to manifest themselves in various ways. We were then directed to change our positions and were seated in rows facing the door, which opened into the adjoining room.

The doorway was covered with a curtain, in the centre of which, was a frame forming a window about 14 by 16 inches, upon which is fixed a small curtain. The medium is seated in the dark room just at back of the curtain. We in the room lighted by means of a kerosene lamp shaded, but light enough to tell the time by watch in any part of the room.

When all was prepared, two more gentlemen were appointed to make an investigation of the rooms, and assure themselves that there was no means of trickery. We then engaged in singing a hymn, in a few seconds the curtain was lifted by two small hands, and a face came forward. It was that of a young female, I should say about 22 years of age. She seemed to recognise one in our number, who in turn recognised her. I do not remember what relationship, though I think it was mentioned. Her name was Eliza. A lady, her relative, was permitted to approach quite near and speak with her. Next a man with high forehead, short cut whiskers and beard, came to the window. He too was recognised by a young man who had been rather troublesome by making all kinds of sceptical remarks, he was *very quiet* afterwards. He was followed by Napoleon, the late Emperor of France. I at once recognised him. A young man spoke to him in French, to which he replied by signs, he could not speak.

The next was a very successful materialization. It was that of a long featured man, with long dark beard, aged about 45. He spoke at some length with his brother who was present, and before departing requested him to write to George, that he might come and see him before the mediums went away. ("George" is another brother in Italy I was informed.)

The seance ended by a spirit arm being thrust out of the window which taking a bell that was hanging above the door, and ringing it, then threw it down. The arm was bare to the shoulder. Instantly the curtain was thrown up and Mr. Bastian dressed in black and entranced, lay in an easy chair, where we had seen him before this part of the seance commenced. It is quite clear that it was not his hand that took the bell.

Even if it could be considered possible for him to assume the features of a fair young lady, and an aged man almost at the same moment, which I or any one else having seen Mr. Bastian would know impossible; his features being of such a marked character, that quite unfits him for such a purpose, his black moustache making it impossible to personate a young lady. These materializations are not shadowy forms but real tangible ones that may be seen and felt, growing into being and fading away as you gaze upon them, and while you speak to them.

It would be as difficult to explain away the reality of this phenomena, as any other physical development of nature.

GEO. A. STOW,

219 Chapel St., Prahran.

Two able letters appeared in the *Bondigo Advertiser* of June 9th, in reference to the Rev. Mr. Lewers' recent attack upon Spiritualism, in which the fallacy of that gentleman's argument, and his disingenuousness were made very apparent. One of the writers attributes Mr. Lewers' onslaught to the dullness of the Theological market and the paucity of attendance at St. John's Church. It appears that the introduction of Spiritualism (even Mr. Lewers' Spiritualism) has temporarily altered this state of things and filled the church. If Mr. L. wants to keep things lively he will have to introduce a little of the genuine article, as people will soon get tired of the "Bogus" he has been exhibiting.

MR. TYERMAN.

THE *Stockwhip* of May 29th reprints a report of a meeting held in Sydney of persons favorable to requesting Mr. Tyerman to remain in Sydney, the Hon. J. B. Wilson in the chair. Resolutions were passed affirming the advisability of so doing, and a strong committee formed to carry out the resolutions. Subscriptions to the amount of £100 were filled, and it was expected the amount would be doubled. The object of the subscription was to subsidise Mr. Tyerman as liberally as possible, and leave him perfect liberty as a lecturer on his own account, either in the metropolis or colony at large.

In reference to the meeting the editor of the *Stockwhip* says:—

"We have heard Mr. Tyerman lecture, and in transferring the above to our columns from the Cumberland Times, are glad to observe that some effort is being made to secure his powerful help as a speaker on the liberal side in New South Wales. Of course, we say so much and do it cordially, from a purely free-thought standpoint, as no opportunity of studying Spiritualism has yet occurred to us. Indeed, except from an effort to be impartial, which is essentially demanded of every aim at free thought, we should be as much inclined to denounce Spiritualism as humbug as we are to recognise the value of free enquiry in all directions, in liberating the human mind to run an increasingly triumphant race in the future. Possibly, however, Mr. Tyerman is before us in this matter, as he certainly is the general public: in respect of his theological opinions *nous verrons*. We can, at all events, recommend to liberals everywhere the free union begun in Sydney towards encouraging Mr. Tyerman to make this city his headquarters, for the benefit, as occasion offers, not of Sydney only, but of the whole colony. Doubtless there are many beyond the Metropolis who will willingly add their names to the subscription list, and we hope to hear of their doing so, as the total should at least come up to twice the £200 already said to be looked for."

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE" ON MESSRS. CROOKES AND WALLACE'S BOOKS.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* maintains its rancorous opposition to Spiritualism, and all things pertaining to it, and recently published what purports to be a review of the two works recently published by Professors Crookes and A. R. Wallace, F.R.S. It was too good a thing in its way for our local contemporary, the *Daily Telegraph*, to pass. They, therefore, printed it in extenso for the delectation of their orthodox and anti-spiritualist readers. The assumption of the ignorant writer is something marvellous: he is evidently innocent of psychological science. The investigations of Elliotson, Ashburner, Buchanan, and Sergeant Cox, are sealed books to him; he has heard of "Reichenbach," but treats him with contempt; talks of the "stale fallacies of the odic force," and speaks of the Baron's twenty years' scientific study of magnetic phenomena as "a mixture of imposture and self-delusion." "Clairvoyance," he says, "has almost ceased to be remembered as a juggler's trick," and mesmerism, and phreno-mesmerism, are "the engrafted branching of one folly upon another." It is difficult to imagine how a journal of the literary standing of the *Pall Mall Gazette* should allow such a display of ignorance place in their columns, but prejudice often blinds judgment, and we presume it has done so in this case.

The conclusion arrived at by this sapient scribbler is, that Messrs. Crookes and Wallace are a couple of weak-minded imbeciles, and he laments that the "aspect of calmness and accuracy" about the books makes them dangerous! If the fellow had any sense he would have left this out; his very admission tells against his own argument. Do weak-minded careless scientists write with calmness and accuracy? It is this characteristic about the works that stirs up the bile of the bigoted and prejudiced, such as this reviewer appears to be. The only ingenuity he has shown is in the selection of his extracts, which in their isolated form answer his purpose admirably, and to the superficial reader would appear ridiculous, though in the works with their contexts they are apropos and comprehensible. It is a general characteristic with this class of mind that they overshoot the mark and by so doing neutralize their efforts for mischief. So it is in the present case, few sensible people will be deterred from reading the books, if they have the opportunity, by the palpably-prejudiced nonsense of the *Pall Mall Gazette* reviewer.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS AT SANDHURST.

Hearing of some successful experiments in Spirit Photography at Sandhurst, we wrote to a gentleman of our acquaintance who had taken part in them, asking for particulars. We subjoin that portion of his letter having reference to our request, from which it appears that the production of Spirit Photos in Victoria is *au fait accompli* :—

As to the Spirit Photographs, I can only say they for a first effort, are a grand success. They have been going the rounds here, and all who see them wonder, perfect hosts of spirits on each, not one, two, three, but dozens. Old men and women, young men and maidens, children some in uniform, in fact, a charming variety. The pictures were taken at 2.30 in my own home. I provided the screen or back ground, (a dark blanket quilt,) and complied with the conditions given in our Scientific circle. I had the assistance of Mr. C.—Photographer, whose side I never left until the pictures were developed, so I can guarantee the *bona fides* of the pictures, one picture being mounted on glass, and considerably rubbed and scratched by use in one instance, with the best accidentally broken; I will wait for our next pictures to be taken on Wednesday, if fine. I believe in a little while if Mrs. W. and I am willing, (being the non-dispensibles,) Mr. C.—will introduce Spirit Photography to the public of Melbourne.

Our Scientific circle is progressing splendidly, we have able and willing helpers for every subject under investigation, and have some experiments in hand, some, success assured, others, on the point of success.

You can make what use you like of this information.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. S.

MR. E. F. HUGHES AT THE TEMPERANCE HALL.

MR. E. F. HUGHES delivered the first of his series of lectures at the Temperance Hall on Sunday, June 13th. The chair was occupied by Mr. Charles Bright, who introduced the lecturer.

Mr. Bright said he had much pleasure in acceding to the request of the Committee and presiding on that occasion to introduce to them his successor, although he had no doubt Mr. Hughes would promptly and satisfactorily introduce himself. Before Mr. Hughes did so, however, he (the Chairman,) wished to say that he might differ from some of the opinions to be expressed by Mr. Hughes, just as that gentleman or others might have failed to agree with much of what had fallen from him in the course of his lectures. The advantage of that platform was that it was a free one, and every speaker was at liberty to express his individual opinion so long as it was in the direction of freedom. If he understood the desires of that Association, its members were far from wishing to form another addition to the sects. The world was sick of sects. It was no mission of theirs to win souls, as the cant phrase was, but rather to liberate people's minds so that they may dare to form opinions for themselves. Martineau said, "No enquirer can fix a direct and clear sighted gaze towards Truth, who is casting side glances all the while on the prospects of his soul." They might leave their souls with confidence to the love of their infinite Father, and meantime work with all their might in behalf of mankind in this life. He trusted they would accord Mr. Hughes the same cordial and attentive hearing they had given to himself.

The lecture was "Religious Systems—their Founders and Promoters." Religion, the lecturer said, is not necessarily a system either of professed belief or of formal observance. There may be true religion without either of these; and there may be both these without any true religion. Neither is religion always made better by being systemised; it is rather, sometimes, made worse; it is narrowed by expression, and shallowed by deepening, being rendered less convincing, more difficult to comprehend, to harmonise, and consistently to maintain. Religion, apart from system, needs no founder; it is a necessary adjunct of our being, the pro-

duct of a latent incipient moral nature, the influence of which on life and character is universally observable. No man can be the founder of religion, but only of a system of religion. It is important to bear this in mind, since some, attached to systems, when their systems are controverted, charge their opponents with the rejection of religion altogether. There is a strong tendency in the human mind, in some minds more especially, to religious system-making, and in equal tendency in religious systems to render religion mechanical, its faith profession, and its practical obligations matters of routine and external formalism. The majority are satisfied with this, since they are thereby spared any large amount of personal earnest thought about religion. Religious systems are primary and subordinate; the primary systems are Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; the subordinate systems are the sects and subdivisions under these. A recognised object of worship, satisfaction, and substitution are common to all religions. The lecturer next referred to the founders and promoters of religious systems, and then showed the relation in which these systems stand to each other, and that religious systems, like those of philosophy, were developed in accordance with the principle of evolution. He traced the action of this principle in the historic systems of the past, and in reviewing present prevailing religious aspects, maintained that existing systems must submit to innovation and modification, or be swept away. Whatever aid religious systems might render to religion itself while they were up to the demands of the age, they became obstructive of progress when they failed to reach that standard, and rebellion against them became a duty. Such rebellion, at the present crisis of religious opinion, was a paramount and urgent duty. Religious systems should be corrected by our convictions, not our convictions by religious systems.

The preliminary reading was from a pamphlet by Mr. Thos. Scott, and was given by our old friend Mr. Naylor. Although his elocution was distinct and impressive, it was observed that his energies were on the wane, though few thought they were hearing his last public utterance.

The subject of the second lecture was "The Divine Charter—Freedom of Thought." Some charters, the lecturer said, are exclusively human; others are exclusively divine, as air, light, life, liberty, freedom of speech, and freedom of thought. Human charters had sometimes suppressed, or sought to infringe upon, divine charters; this had been especially the case with reference to personal freedom; and as a consequence most of the steps taken in the path of progress had been taken over blood, if not our own, or our own shedding, that of those who had gone before. The great and holy battle of all the ages had been; it was the battle of the present age; and our battle it should be, to establish the divine in the human. All advances towards a better state of humanity had been made under warrant of divine charters; and so they should be still made; not, however, by the use of powder, and the sword, but free thought, wielded by free speech. Free thought was an inalienable charter, but it could only be made available for the advantage of others by becoming uttered, circulated thought. While duly estimating the boon, it was therefore the duty of every one to employ and improve it both for his own good, and the good of others, and not trust his thinking to the direction of clerical sponsors, and think only to order as issued by them. The lecturer urged his hearers to make freedom of thought, coupled with free speech, and a free platform, a speciality, and to employ it mainly in the direction of the pulpit, and not to rest satisfied until free thought ruled in the churches, and there was a free pulpit as well as a free platform, since it was from the pulpit that antagonism to free thought chiefly emanated. They should be cautious, however, not to fall into the orthodox error and weakness of seeking to systemise free thought. Formulated free thought, he said, is a misnomer, a contradiction. Differences of age, of intelligence, of experience, of mental capacity and disposition, make us to differ from each other, and from ourselves, if we compare one period of our lives with another, and must therefore render all attempts at the establishment of a fixed permanent form of religious belief an ultimate failure.

With an acknowledged desire to be right, confidence in each other, free thought, free speech, and a free platform, we might safely trust to a free faith.

The subject of last Sunday being yet incomplete, we shall reserve our report for next issue.

ITEMS OF NEWS BY MAIL.

Mr Crookes has made another important discovery in relation to the action of Light. The matter was brought before the Royal Society by him at its last April meeting, and demonstrated by a simple instrument by which the mechanical action of light was made apparent. We shall give fuller particulars of this discovery in our next.

The phenomena of Materialization is intensifying in interest, and proofs are accumulating rapidly. At a recent seance, held at Messrs. Bastian and Taylor's, held under the strictest test conditions, the materialized spirit led the medium from the cabinet, and both were visible to the spectators at the same time.

The £100 challenge offered to Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook, to produce their manifestations under the same conditions as the spirit media, has not been accepted by them.

From a letter received from Mr. Foster by a friend in Melbourne, it appears probable that Mr. F. will re-visit this city before the end of the present year.

SPIRITUALISM AT SANDHURST.

The Sandhurst Progressive Spiritualist and Free-thought Association held their usual three-monthly reunion at the Rifles Orderly Room, View Point, on Wednesday, June 2nd, 1875, and combined with it the anniversary fete of the Lyceum connected with the above Association. Proceedings commenced early in the afternoon by the children and their leaders taking a pleasant drive of some duration, returning with the fading day fully prepared to enjoy the inviting repast awaiting their discussion. After tea games were introduced and sustained with zest by the little ones for an hour. The exercise prescribed for Lyceum practice followed, then recitations, &c. Among the pupils who deserve especial mention for the creditable manner in which they acquitted themselves were Miss Rosina Fletcher, who sang a simple little song very nicely, Miss Nellie Martell, Masters James and John Miller, Master George Meagher for recitation. At 7 o'clock a goodly number of the friends sat down to tea, during which a pleasant chit-chat or table talk prevailed. Before dancing Mr. F. Singleton, an earnest worker in the cause, intimated that he desired the attention of the guests, when in a graceful little speech he announced the pleasing duty he had to perform on their behalf, namely, the presentation of a souvenir in the form of a highly mounted writing desk and illuminated address to W. J. Martell, President of the Association. That gentleman responded in a few earnest and appropriate words, in which he expressed himself much gratified, not for the intrinsic value, but the kindly sentiments that prompted the offering, for any persevering efforts in connection with the cause where his services had been rendered all credit was due to the lofty and wise intelligences whose loving counsel had guided him for the last four years, and to whose teaching he was indebted for the glorious truths which he would endeavor to uphold through his earth life. A short trance address was then given through Miss Phillips by one of her principal guides applicable for the occasion. The dancing then commenced, and continued till one o'clock. During the evening a circle was formed in an adjacent room, and some amusement was caused by various controls of media, two singing spirits demonstrated their presence. It was evident the immortals felt the harmonious influence of the meeting. Before departing, the company joined in Auld Lang Syne and God Save the Queen, and many were the expressions of pleasure exchanged with the adieus at the complete enjoyment of the evening.

(Copy of address.)

Dear Friend,—With sincere and heartfelt pleasure we, the members of the above-named Association, re-

quest your kind acceptance of the accompanying writing desk as a trifling token of our appreciation and recognition of your earnest and zealous labours in the cause of that philosophy which opens out to us a worthy and expansive idea of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. We have deemed it only necessary to select for presentation something that would be useful, trusting that in its usefulness we could better convey some idea of the feelings that actuate us in thus tendering this memento of the respect and esteem which we entertain for you, as well as some slight expression of gratitude for the unremitting diligence you have so long displayed in the cause to which we are devoted, and which together with your consistency in the routine of everyday life cannot but have attracted others to Spiritualism, thereby awakening within them the desire to investigate its glorious truth for themselves. Accept our profound and ardent wishes for your happiness.

DEATH OF MR. B. S. NAYLER.

This veteran labourer in the cause of Freethought and Spiritualism, passed quietly away to the Spirit-world on the evening of Wednesday June 23rd. Mr. Nayler was born at Darlington, in the County of Durham, England, in March 1796. He resided in Holland for upwards of 25 years, and was for some time English Professor to the University of Amsterdam. At the age of 28, he married the daughter of an eminent Dutch Painter, named Liernur. Mrs. Nayler inherited the gift of her father, and produced during her married life, many excellent pictures, her forte being principally fruit, flowers and birds. They were deeply attached to each other, and celebrated their golden wedding early last year, Mrs. Nayler passing away a few months after. Mr. Nayler commenced the investigation of Spiritualism and having assured himself of the fact of Spirit intercourse, by opening up communication with several of his departed friends, he was not slow in taking steps to proclaim the new gospel, and delivered a series of lectures at the Mechanics' Institute Melbourne, commencing August 11th., 1869. The lectures were well attended, but the lecturer's religious opinions were too radically Unitarian for the majority of his audiences, and much opposition was shewn both to him and the cause he advocated. The lectures were afterwards published in pamphlet form and had a considerable circulation. During the latter part of 1869, he started the first Spiritualistic paper in Victoria, (*The Glowworm*), but the circulation was inadequate to sustain it, and after a six months struggle it succumbed. Mr. Nayler lectured occasionally for the local Association of Spiritualists, and about three years since accepted an engagement as Lecturer for the Stawell Lyceum, which he filled until the end of last year. At the beginning of the present year Mr. Nayler came to Melbourne, where he was provided with means to end his days in comfort. He was not however the man to remain idle, and within a fortnight of his death, he published a pamphlet criticising the creeds of modern Christendom, and proposing a scheme for the establishment of an Association of Freethinkers. He is also the author of the book "A Discussion on the Unity, Duality, and Trinity of God," published by Trübner & Co., of London, and other works.

Mr. Nayler's last appearance in public was on the platform of the Temperance Hall, on the 13th ult., where he gave the preliminary reading to Mr. Hughes's first lecture. He was in our establishment four days before his death, but though his faculties were clear and bright (as they remained to the last,) it was evident that the tie which kept him in the body was very weak. The immediate cause of death was congestion of the lungs, the system being too weak to throw off the congestive fluid. In accordance with the known wishes of the departed, the funeral was exempt from any of the ordinary insignia of mourning, we annex a brief account of the proceedings:—

The funeral was appointed to leave Victoria Parade, at half-past 2 on Saturday, June 26th., and shortly before that time about fifty friends of the deceased arrived, and took a last view of the body, which

preserved the same calm placid expression it had in life. No signs of discoloration or decomposition were visible, and no odor save that of the beautiful flowers which filled the interstices of the coffin. At half-past 2 the coffin was closed, and the procession which consisted of a hearse and four mourning coaches, accompanied by a number of private vehicles and cabs, proceeded to the cemetery. No plumes, hatbands or gloves were to be seen, but a little sprig of Rosemary, (indicative of remembrance,) fastened with a yellow ribbon, (symbolical of spirituality and wisdom,) was worn upon the left breast, and many had small bouquets in their button-holes. Arrived at the Cemetery, the procession was joined by about fifty more friends, including the Choir of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, who on the coffin being deposited in the grave, sang the following beautiful hymn of Longfellow's:—

"Take them, O Death! and bear away
Whatever thou canst call thy own!
Thine image, stamped upon this clay,
Doth give thee that, but that alone!
Take them, O Grave! and let them lie
Folded upon thy narrow shelves,
As garments by the soul laid by
And precious only to ourselves.
Take them, O great Eternity!
Our little life is but a gust,
That bends the branches of the tree
And trails its blossoms in the dust!"

Mr. Ross spoke of Mr. Naylor as a man of very remarkable character. He left this world in his 80th year, and according to usual notions he might be considered as a relic of the past, to which all his sympathies might be supposed to be confined. Not so with Mr. Naylor. Never behind the age, but generally in advance, he was ever the champion of reform, and everything human had his warmest sympathies. A friend of old and young, ever ready to form new associations with the freshness of a youthful mind. Those who knew him through his vigorous and uncompromising writings only, might form a harsh opinion of his character, but those who have had the great privilege of knowing him in the privacy of his own home, proved him to be a heart overflowing with the genuine "milk of human kindness." Mr. Naylor was married to a talented lady not less remarkable than himself. They celebrated the 50th anniversary of their wedding day last year, at Stawell, and soon after, on the 28th July, after much trouble and sorrow, Mrs. Naylor departed to a "better world." As soon as convenient thereafter Mr. Naylor came to Melbourne, where he was received with warm affection and solicitous regard. Before his arrival an arrangement was come to whereby his future wants and comforts were to be attended to, without compromising his independence, which he was jealous in preserving. Although no blood relations then surrounded his grave which received his mortal remains, few indeed departed this life leaving behind them such a sense of bereavement, and regret for lost opportunities, as were experienced by many who had the pleasure and profit of Mr. Naylor's intimate acquaintance.

Mr. Bright followed with a few appropriate words, acknowledging the pleasure he had had in the friendship of Mr. Naylor, and commending the reform initiated in the funeral arrangement and proceedings, as in harmony with the reformatory views of the deceased.

Mr. Hughes whilst regretting his limited opportunity of acquaintance with Mr. Naylor which he had hoped to have obviated during his present stay in Melbourne, he mentioned that Mr. Naylor was the first to bring Spiritualism under his notice, during a correspondence which took place between them, some years since. He illustrated our nearness to the Spirit world by pointing to the body as the bridge, we on one side, our friend on the other.

The Choir then sung Byron's fine hymn "Immortality" at the conclusion of which they and others threw their floral offerings into the grave till the coffin was almost hidden with flowers. This concluded the proceedings, and the friends dispersed to their several homes.

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